

the Underworld

Worked in Partnership of the Criminal World lives in Palm Beach, Cuba and on the Big Warns the Public ps Are Baited

Crime man has been found to be the most valuable asset a criminal can acquire.

The development of this new employment of attractive women as lures for criminal gangs has opened new fields of crime which are startling. And disreputable lawyers have found that their greatest profits come from the little band of conscienceless women who they train to lure victims into their clutches.

The respectable man or woman who reads this page, who has never seen a professional criminal, who feels as secure from the traps of the Underworld as from the venomous reptiles of the African jungle, may be quite easily ensnared by these new and unsuspected professional "Vamps."

In the Pullman cars, at the fashionable hotels, at the Summer resorts, at Palm Beach, on the ocean liners these stalking-horses for their criminal masters lie in ambush to entrap their victims. Pretty, richly but not flashily dressed, often masquerading under names of well-known families, some with graces which would become a Fifth Avenue drawing room, these women skillfully stage the first act of the criminal tragedy which their confederates complete.

Ordinary prudence has taught everybody to fasten windows and lock doors at night and put valuables in safe places, for it is common knowledge how sneak thieves and burglars work. But not even the police are yet sufficiently informed to fully warn the public of the insidious menace of these newest activities of the criminal world.

On this page to-day is printed the first chapter of the confessions of a professional Vampire, Mrs. Margaret Hill. This young woman was in partnership with some of the ablest criminals in America. She had a wide acquaintance with other "Vamps" and other coteries of criminals, and her revelations of these newest and wickedest snares of the Underworld may save some reader of this page from falling into one of the traps she explains and exposes.

pietters. But many victims whom I and other women I knew, lured to the clutches of the gang would not have been caught, I think, if they had read or heard of how we operated.

So thoroughly well organized was one gang of which I will write that the entire fourth floor of a well-known Boston hotel was said to have been engaged by the year for their operations. This was not a hotel of shady reputation; the gang were too shrewd to use a place where any suspicion might be aroused in their victims.

This particular gang specialized on blackmail. I know them, and will reveal their methods, but their methods were more brutal than brainy. Still, they were very thorough, and they shared profits with the prosecuting officers of Boston; an arrangement my associates and I never felt it necessary to make.

The corporation directory was examined and the financial standing of men was ascertained. When a substantial business man had been marked as a "prospect" detectives were put on his trail to shadow him. If nothing worth while was discovered, then at least the reports of the detectives gave opportunity to study the man's habits of life and determine whether it would be worth while to assign a vamp to try to trap him.

I have said that nobody is entirely safe, especially from such methods as those Boston blackmailers employed. I remember the president of the Narrow Gauge Railroad, Boston, Melvin O. Adams, who was trapped in a way which would probably have caught anybody, no matter how well on his guard he might have been.

It was while the detectives were trailing Mr. Adams that the annual dinner of a political club came along, at which the financier was scheduled to speak. He lived out of town, so after finishing his day's work at the office he took a suitcase with his evening clothes and went around to the hotel, where the gang was said to be in partnership with the hotel management.

Mr. Adams stepped up to the desk to register and explained that he only wanted a room for half an hour to change his clothes. The detective who was trailing him and was known to the clerk made the secret sign and the man was given a room.

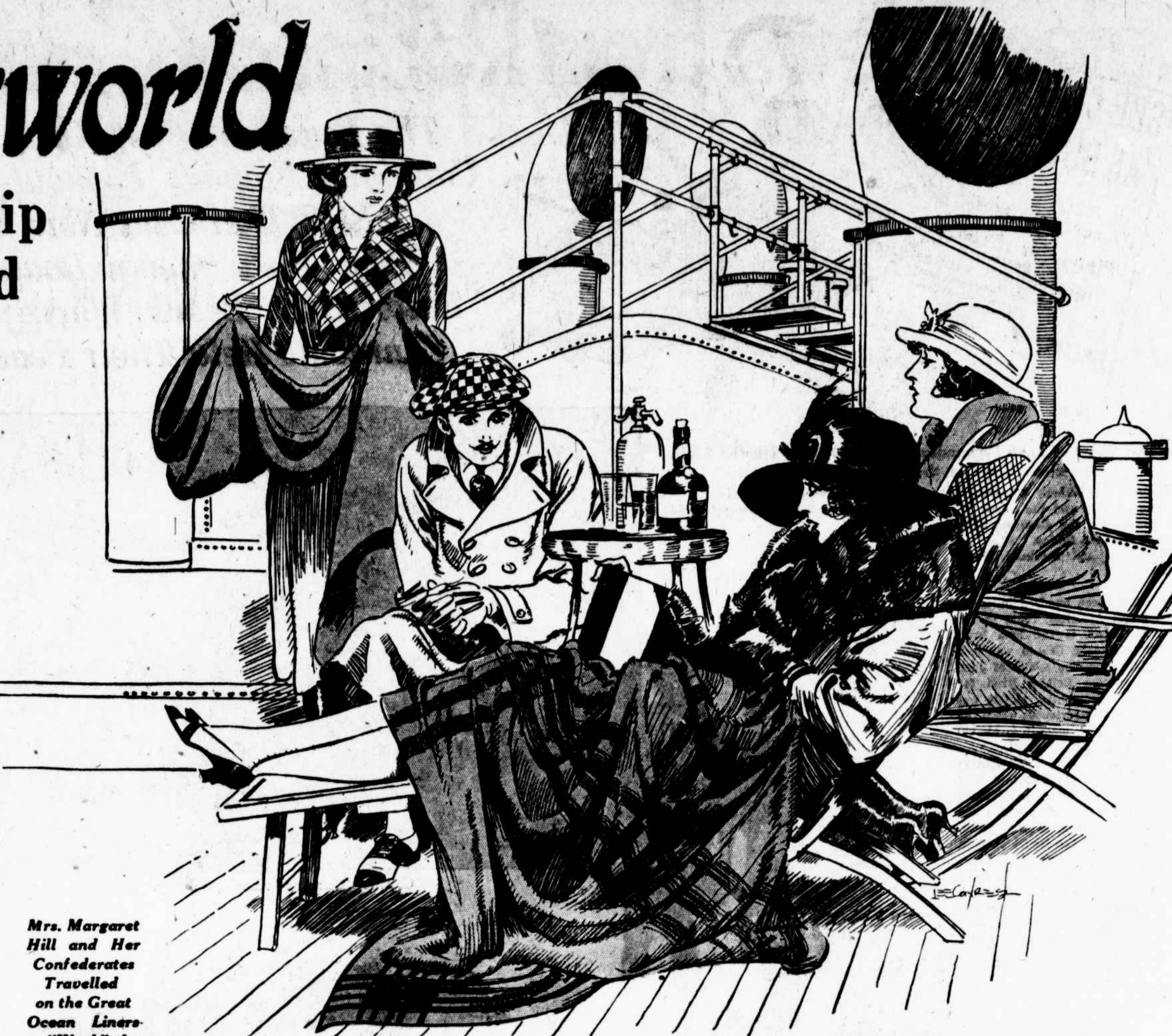
Scarcely had the unsuspecting guest closed the door and opened his suitcase when a bellboy rapped and asked him to come down to the office floor to answer a telephone call, as the room phone was out of order. The telephone call, of course, proved to be a "mistake."

The president spread out his evening clothes, stripped off his business suit and was again disturbed. This time angry voices came to him over the transom. The demand to open the door was shouted in no gentle terms.

"What do you mean by having a woman in your room?" cried the house detective.

"You are making a mistake. There is nobody here in this room but myself," the guest replied.

Pushing past him, the detective strode into the bathroom while the room clerk pulled open the door of the



Mrs. Margaret Hill and Her Confederates Travelled on the Great Ocean Liners to "Work" the Big Millionaires.

She Was Outfitted with Furs, Jewels and All the Equipment Necessary to Play the Part of a Millionaire's Wife. Her Maid Was Also a Crook, Who Was Not Only Attentive to Mrs. Hill, But Made Herself Useful in Securing Confidences and Valuable Information from the Maids of Other Passengers.

closet—and out stepped a trembling, weeping, almost naked girl.

Utterly dumfounded, the president protested that he had never seen the woman before—which was, indeed, perfectly true.

And then there arrived on the scene a man, who cried:

"Now I have caught you—this woman is my wife!"

A man who said he was the manager joined the loud, excited group. He was indignant at the guest who had imposed on his hotel—but he interceded with the "husband" of the vamp in the closet not to drag the president to the police station and thus bring unpleasant notoriety upon his respectable hotel.

"Hasty action, my dear man," he argued, "will do you no good. You have here the witnesses and you can decide what to do later on."

And turning to the astounded guest, he said: "There is a lawyer down in the office. The best thing is to have him talk with the woman's husband and see what can be done. We must try to keep this out of the newspapers."

Relieved for the moment to find a means of escape, the stupefied victim consented to place his interests in the hands of a lawyer who was a member of the gang. The guest was thus completely trapped. Next day began the negotiations, starting at \$100,000 as the price demanded by the pretended husband of the vamp, and finally scaled down to \$20,000 cash, which the unfortunate victim's lawyer assured him must be paid unless he preferred to face business ruin, a criminal prosecution and a broken-hearted wife.

What would the reader of this page decide to do if caught in the same abominable trap? He would probably pay the price of silence, as the president of that Boston railroad did.

But President Adams did the wrong thing. He should have defied the blackmailers. He should have gone at once to the police station and made complaint, and then to the newspapers and frankly stated the facts. This is the thing blackmailers fear—they succeed because they know the terrified victim can be relied upon to do the wrong thing and try to purchase silence.

I had a friend who was blackmailed. He was a man of family and responsible business standing, and the blackmailers in his case caught him in a guilty entanglement. And yet he was too smart for them.

"Yes, gentlemen," he said in calm, even tones, "if you expose me it will ruin my business standing and will kill my wife. If you expose me I shall shoot myself rather than face the disgrace. BUT, GENTLEMEN, BEFORE I SHOOT MYSELF I WILL KILL EACH ONE OF YOU!"

The blackmailers were beaten. They wanted his money; he refused to pay for silence. To expose him would be no profit to them. They rather believed what he threatened. They let him alone.

Will the readers of this page ponder this advice—never yield to a blackmailer! And remember one thing more; if you pay once, you will pay again and again the rest of your life. Always the blackmailer will pursue you.

I have said that nobody is entirely safe from the new activities of the Underworld criminals. And I have briefly

told of the net which so swiftly enmeshed the unsuspecting victim on the fatal fourth floor of that Boston hotel.

But men are not the only victims. The wife, the daughter, the fiancée may be decoyed into a situation quite as hopeless. I will explain in detail in a future chapter how innocent girls and married women are ensnared—caught just as completely as the trappers drew their net around President Melvin Adams.

But the varied fields of activity of the vampire partner of the modern professional criminal are not confined to blackmail. Under the pleasant smile and protecting skirts of a vamp a large part of the forbidden opium drugs finds its way into the country. To the pretty, attractively dressed vamp, also, is entrusted the work of getting safely over the border a large part of the liquor which is coming in from Canada night and day. In a dozen other ways the criminal's pretty partner is now used to set the stage for the crime he plans. All this I will explain in complete detail in subsequent chapters.

As in legitimate business enterprises, so also in the world of crime there are captains of industry and little criminals. I have known vamps who were lavishly outfitted with a \$3,000 squirrel coat and a complete wardrobe and jewels to match. And I will tell you of the modest enterprises of a little vamp who was satisfied with a \$10 bill as the net proceeds of a day's work. My own share of a successful bit of work varied from \$6,000 to \$30,000, as I will explain later.

To grasp the magnitude of the scale on which the big gangs are now working it is necessary for the reader to realize that the operators are organized on a business basis with a cash capital for operating expenses. Elbert Hubbard once said:

"I have never known a lawyer who had any respect for the law. Always they will take your money and show you how to evade the law. Wherever you find a crooked corporation or a dishonest contract you will find that a lawyer drew up the papers and showed them how to operate."

What more natural, then, than to find the crooked lawyer applying his knowledge and skill for his own pocket? And so it has come about that many of the master minds of the criminal world to-day are lawyers. And in Boston and the adjoining city of Cambridge two crooked lawyers who had risen to be the prosecuting officers of the counties have just been removed for their partnership with crooks!

The criminal used to come to the lawyer for advice when he was in trouble. The lawyer now plans the crime and the criminal is his partner or his employee.

Thus there has come into the field of crime a superior quality of brains. The lawyer is a college man with years of post-graduate law school work and practise. The lawyer is able to bring to bear a high degree of intelligence and he completely outmatches the dull-witted police detectives.

It has been said that nature has produced nothing worse than a thoroughly bad woman. This is, indeed, true—and surely in my wide range of acquaintances in the Underworld I am qualified to judge. But there is an evil combination nature never contemplated, which is even more wicked—a bad woman and a bad man. And when that bad man is a conscienceless lawyer, the cruel, merciless machinations of such a pair are sometimes beyond belief.

Women I have known in the Underworld do not seem to me to have been naturally vicious—at some moment in

their lives a man has secured mastery over them for his own evil purposes. And that mastery is almost always achieved by teaching women to use opium. When this has been accomplished by a professional criminal or by a criminal lawyer, he has attached to himself a veritable slave.

That is how my descent into the Underworld was accomplished. It is the history, too, of hundreds of other women who are now the helpless partners of criminals.

I had been marked out by one of the ablest criminals in America as a woman who seemed to possess exceptional qualifications for him to make use of. I was young, not unattractive (I was told), was possessed of excellent education, had travelled, and I had engaging manners and was at home in any drawing room.

This clever criminal, the widely-known confidence man, "Billy" Humphreys, determined to attach me to his enterprises as a "convincer." I was a widow and his long, patient campaign to master me was worthy of his fame in police records. At last he won—and his victory came on the fateful day when I finally yielded to his persistent begging and took my first trial of the drug which enslaved me and made him my master.

For two years he made me masquerade as his wife. As Mrs. William Humphreys we travelled here and in Europe hunting and snaring victims. We travelled like millionaires—he was Mr. William Humphreys, "President of the Reinforced Cork Bottom Boat Company of Wall Street."

To Humphreys I owe my acquaintance with the famous Gondorff Brothers, the kings of the world of swindlers. Through Humphreys I met and worked in partnership with the great, master-minds of the criminal world. It was, I suppose, a flattering tribute to my resourceful skill that these men welcomed me to their councils and entrusted to me the really most difficult parts to play in their criminal dramas.

Thus it was that I was staged to lure the Russian Grand Duke Boris, brother of the Czar, to my chateau just outside of Paris. In this adventure I played the sophisticated woman of the world who knew cards, horse races, and numbered among her acquaintances the women of doubtful reputation of the gay French capital. And I was provided with the furs and gowns and jewels and limousines to properly dress that part.

So also it fell to me to assume in our next enterprise quite another character. This time I was the wife of a conservative New York capitalist. I was to win the friendship of the elderly wife of a North Carolina local magnate—and I told of my charities, my mission and church work and sermonized on the demoralizing effects of the fast life of the idle rich.

And here again my wardrobe must fit my part. The gay gowns which Grand Duke Boris applauded must be put out of sight—a high-neck dinner dress and modest jewels better fitted the character.

So, year after year, from Canada to Cuba, and here and there in Europe we trafficked on the unsuspecting innocence and ignorance of our victims. Next Sunday, on this page, I will explain in detail exactly how one of our enterprises was conceived and worked out to a successful end. And I hope that what I reveal may some time safeguard some innocent reader who has been marked for a victim.

(To Be Continued Next Sunday)